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WHITE FOUNTAINS

Odes and Lyrics

EDWARD J. O'BRIEN

"Wise men, all ways of knowledge past,
To the shepherds' wonder come at last:
To know can only wonder breed,
And not to know is wonder's seed."

SIDNEY GODOLPHIN.

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TO

MY MOTHER

WHO FIRST BREATHED THE DREAM

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NOTE.

A word is necessary as to the metrical form of the two odes in this volume. This form is based on the rhythms of Gregorian plain chant, with certain modifications required by the genius of English speech. Caesural pauses are indicated by commas, following the tradition of Mr. Bridges, Mr. Doughty, and other English poets. The metre may be accelerated or retarded in this form as the emotional expression demands, and rhyme is used sparingly where the pulse of the verse requires swift singing expression. The possibilities of this metrical form in English verse were first hinted at in the rhythms of Synge's "Riders to the Sea," and Lord Dunsany's "Book of Wonder." It has found one great poet in French verse in the person of Paul Claudel.

EDWARD J. O'BRIEN.

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WHITE FOUNTAINS

ODES.

I. FLESH.
II. FLOWER.

PRELUDE.

FLESH unto flowers,
And flame unto wind,
The cleansing of showers
Shall come to thee blind.

In the night of thy sleeping
The sound of the tide
Shall waken thee weeping
To turn to my side.

FLESH.

To "Humilis"

The Poet speaketh to his Flesh:

WHENCE art thou come, O substance, fleeing in vain from the Spirit who doth rule thee?
What dost thou weave in silence, in the heart of tumultuous days?

Light playeth upon thee, and the sun smileth upon thy Beauty, and saith it is good;
yet the Heart of me knoweth thee not, and my Mind knoweth not the web of thy weaving.

Strange is the joy of thy Fingers, touching cool water, in the dawn of the morning:
strange are thy smooth white Sides, in the sunlit shade of the birches.

Thine Eyes, awful with wonder, what is their clear white vision,
sealed in the waters of silence, hidden in plumy sleep?

Thy Neck, slender and dovelike, is it the whisper of music,
dipping its happy smoothness, in the cool running waters of life?

Flesh. Thy Shoulders, which shine in the pool, high and calm in their grace,
are they the song of thy Beauty, erect in the sight of the angels?

Thy Bosom, where laugheth the sunlight,
is it the secret tabernacle,
watched by the morning stars, as they shine on the heart of the world?

Thine Arms, which glisten in freedom,
do they fly with the wings of the morning,
bearing thee from the night, o'er the silver waters of sleep?

Thy Fingers, white as the water drops, thy Fingers which touch in silence,
what do they whisper thee, in the quiet hours of the evening?

Thy Sides, with the curve of worship, soft as the blush of springlight,
what is the song of their praise, in the golden throb of noonday?

Thy Back, with the shy smooth shadows,
what doth she hide from thy thoughts, in the still reflections of slumber?

Thy Thighs, springing bravely in poise, from the dream of thy inmost being,
what is their silent message, to the Eyes which behold their stillness?

Thy secret eternal Organs, creative in ecstasy, *Flesh.*
what is their strong brave prayer, praising the living God?

Thy Legs, with the brave firm muscles,
what is the hymn of their motion,
propelling the suave strong Feet, on the common road to the sunrise?

What do they say to thine Heart?
and what is her answering music?

Tell me the song of thine Heart, O beautiful nude brown Body.

Tell me thy musical Word, naked and unashamed.

And his Flesh answereth the Poet:

I am thy singing voice.

Thine Heart heareth not, the tides of my music,
but the stars of the sea, and the wind in the laughing heavens.

The rushing song of my veins, doth laugh in the eyes of the angels:
the harmony of my music, doth ring in the ears of the Most High.

And one day there cometh silence, and thine Heart shall be tuned to my singing,
and in the valley of death, thou shalt bow to my song of praise.

Flesh. *Then the Poet saith to his Flesh:*

Am I not a Poet, and do I not see thy Beauty?
Wherefore then shall I not hear, thy song of praise in my youth?

And his Flesh answereth the Poet:

Truly I know thee now not as other men.

For thine Heart doth call unto my music,
and thy Mouth shall give voice to my song.

Hear then my voice.

I am the substance which doth free: from mine Heart flow the waves of my music.
Flooding the heart of Heaven, they rise to the Feet of God.

My movement is born of desire, and longing awful with silence:
my movement dieth in Love, and the Heart of Eternal Rest.

Starlight and apple bloom, are waves of my musical weaving:
water and tremulous wind, are the light of my singing mesh.

My playing doth laugh in the dawn, and smile on the golden sun:
it sinketh to rest in the evening, and slumbereth under the moon.

Body of earth am I, and Flame of the lucid heavens: *Flesh.*
Light shineth forth from my Side, I bless thee with candid Hands.

Then his Hands say unto the Poet:

We are the will of thy Flesh: we are thine Hands.

The purity of thy Flesh, cometh out of the gleaming Waters:
the shining Light of thy Flesh, is smooth in thy cleansing Hands.

We are the laughter of water, the pallor of dreaming moonlight:
we bear the softness of vision, to thy fair brown tremulous Sides.

Sleek as the breast of the dove, is the gentle Flesh we have laven:
silent as laughing water, under the silver moon.

The Light of the running spheres, doth glisten under our Nails:
Nails with the twilight flush, at the heart of a folded rose.

Light runneth over our Palms, singing strange starry secrets:
Light doth sing in our veins, the song of our grey-veiled Will.

Flesh. We are the eyes of the blind, who dip in the midnight waters:
we are the ears of silence, feeling the rhythm of rest.

We taste the wonders of touch:
the tremulous secrets of being,
elude not our rosy-tipped Fingers, dawn-colored messenger birds.

And, still, in the evening starlight,
folded in adoration,
we dream of the end of our labor, bow to the dove-white Word.

And the Poet saith to his Hands:

Peace to you, O mine Hands.

Into you now I commit, the passionate dreams of my youth:
into you now do I set, the wingéd words of my song.

Lay your dawn-colored Fingers, upon the innocent paper,
and free the wings of my verses, from the sunlit walls of my Heart,

that they may fly o'er the mirroring waters, imaged in rippling circles:
and gazing therein I may learn, the flame-white dream of mine Eyes.

We are the dream of thy Flesh: we are thine Eyes.

The stars gaze upon us, in wonder and adoration:
curtained in veinéd Light, we surprise the secret of song.

Blood dreameth deep,
and the nerve of our single musical wonder,
doth whisper the shadowed Word, to the dream that our eyelids bear.

Light doth meet us with joy, as the Bridegroom cometh unto the Bride;
of our marriage are born white dreams, bearers of peaceful tidings.

Dream
weaveth in and out of thy Flesh, through our welcoming vision:
prayer shineth out of the depths, of our musical placid pools.

Color we fashion in streams, and fountains of adoration:
form, in the rhythm of peace, is born in our vision of worship.

We are the brimming waters, where eternity meeteth time;
and white in the shining fields of our childhood, the candor of stars.

Flesh. Light giveth praise unto Light, from morning unto the evening:
from evening unto the morning, Light resteth on fluttering wings.

And the gentle wonder of sorrow, is thine through our patient weaving:
we dream of the end of our dreaming, bow to the dove-white Word.

And the Poet saith to his Eyes:

Peace to you, O mine Eyes.

Out of your placid depths, rise the dreams that fill me with wonder:
into your pools of Light, they sink with a murmur of prayer.

Beckon the Light of dawn, and the still transparence of evening,
forth from the singing veil, of eternal adoration.

But now, O mine Eyes, turn to the mirroring waters;
cast your dreaming sight, on the fair brown Neck:
and gazing thereon I may learn, her flowery dream.

I am the flower of thy Flesh: I am thy Neck.

The slender Flower of thy Flesh, bloweth fair
in the pulsing sunrise:
she doth dream of the golden day, in the placid
hours of twilight.

The flowering pillar of the Body's temple,
adoreth the Holy Ghost:
in the morning hours, her chalice receiveth the
Bridegroom.

Light revolveth around, and showereth treasure:
the low susurrus of slumber, caresseth her
Beauty.

Slender and yielding as wonder, and firm as
thought,
her dream is the whisper of silence, and water
springs.

Wind and the rippling of sunlight, play on her
gentle petals:
she doth bow to the heart of the night, in holy
repose,

dreaming of windy fields, where angels run in
the grasses:
dreaming of Heaven's fields, where the flowers
in choir
sing to the Most High.

Flesh. And then cometh morning Light,
and the hymn of the cock,
and the old watchdog, barking at early risers,

and lo! in the East, the laughing Eyes of the Bridegroom:
she doth dream of the end of her flowering, bow to the dove-white Word.

And the Poet saith to his Neck:

Peace to thee, O my Neck.

Blow, happy flower, in music of adoration:
blow in the morning Light, to the Eyes of the golden Bridegroom!

Whisper a prayer in the evening,
for thou hast found favor in His sight:
He hath gazed on the work of His Hands, and saith it is good.

And now, O mine Eyes,
cast your dreaming sight, on the high calm beautiful Shoulders:
and gazing thereon I may learn, their angelic song.

Then his Shoulders say unto the Poet:

We are the song of thy Flesh: we are thy Shoulders.

The gentle song of our Beauty, doth flow through the air of morning:
doves are not fairer, nor plashing of water on sunlit sands.

Shadow runneth over us, and Light chaseth Light in our veins:
high in the glow of noon, we rise to the Sun as our Lover.

Color playeth over us, and imparteth strange starry secrets:
the Light of grace, weaveth in and out of our Beauty.

We are the Body's, silent aspiration:
out of our dreams, grow the Spirit's rustling pinions.

Erect and calm, by the shores of the limitless ocean,
we sing with the roar of the tide, into the Eyes of the Father;
we sing with the laughter of stars, hidden under our wings.

Swimming in water or Light,
we part the elements, bowing before our Beauty:
the wind doth sing, for joy that we are fair.

And we are the great companions, thy twin guardian angels:
we are the song of thy Flesh, as it dreameth of the Most High.

Flesh. Calm as remembered loveliness, we shine in the crystal pool:
and dream of the end of our song, bow to the dove-white Word.

And the Poet saith to his Shoulders:

Peace to you, O my Shoulders.

How you are fair when the morning, doth wrap you in wings of sunlight:
soft is your repose, as the prayer of a maiden.

And you are strong as prayer, as you shine in the pride of the Body,
singing the hymn of her Beauty, erect in the sight of the angels.

But now, O mine Eyes,
cast your dreaming sight, on the laughing Bosom:
and gazing thereon I may learn, her hidden treasure.

Then his Bosom saith to the Poet:

I am the shrine of thy Flesh: I am thy Bosom.

I say unto thee, that man knoweth not, the flame of my adoration:
planets that sing in choir, and crucifixions.

Stars that flow in my veins, are urgent with rushing music: *Flesh.*
in awful silence of wonder, I receive the Flesh of the Bridegroom.

Mine is the laughter of fire:
naked as Light is my Beauty.

I am thy Body's nest:
and I am warm.

Light playeth through me, and casteth shadow soft as prayer:
yet my Love hath tides, that roar as the limits of ocean.

Gentle as the water-spring, when I touch the breasts of the Beloved:
mine is the fragrance of wind, from the fields of thyme.

And then in the cool of the evening, wrapped in the white veil of slumber,
thine Arms repose as a cross, on my altar of benediction,

and I dream in the breathing stillness, hushed with majestic wings:
dream of the Host in the shrine, bow to the dove-white Word.

Flesh. *And the Poet saith to his Bosom:*

Peace to thee, O my Bosom.

How clear is thy smile, in the rapture of contemplation:
how soft is thy prayer, rising and falling profoundly.

Teach me the source of thy vision, thy rhythm of aspiration:
guard my slumber, and waken my dreams to high desire.

And now, O mine Eyes,
cast your dreaming sight, on the glorious Arms:
and gazing thereon I may learn, their wingéd deed.

Then his Arms say unto the Poet:

We are the pride of thy Flesh: we are thine Arms.

Firm in the glow of the morning, we bear thee over the waters:
thy dreams rest on us as a pillow, in the watches of the night.

We are the will of thy Shoulders, flaming with news from the Body:
we trouble thine Hands with Beauty, and they obey.

Out of our strength ariseth, the Shoulders' aspiration: *Flesh.*
the secret of Light floweth down, to the tips of the Fingers.

Spring doth abide in us, and the curve of wheat:
the flame of poppies, doth redden under our Flesh.

And then cometh summer tan,
and the wine of the sun doth flood in our veins:
Life thundereth, in the ebb and flow of our tides.

Low as the rumble of thunder on distant hills,
or the echoes of toil, that rise from the heart of a city,
the will of the Body's labor, doth roar in our rushing channels.

And then cometh peace,
and the stillness of earth and rain.

Will driveth under the grass, and urgeth flowers, to blow from our dust:
we dream at the end of our striving, bow to the dove-white Word.

And the Poet saith to his Arms:

Peace to you, O mine Arms.

I say unto you, that you have done well in my service:
you have earned much, O good and faithful servants.

Flesh. Into your care I commit, the flame of my Body's labor:
you shall have rest, at the end of the Master's harvest.

And now, O mine Eyes,
cast your dreaming sight, on the slender Fingers:
and gazing thereon I may learn, their flame-tipped aspiration.

Then his Fingers say unto the Poet:

We are the buds of thy Flesh: we are thy Fingers.

As the sap runneth out through the bough,
so doth thy dream flow forth through our fairness.

Time slippeth past, as the leaf on the current:
we are the measure, of the Eternal stillness.

The dawn doth dream under our iridescent nails:
in our hidden valleys of Light, lieth the shadow of evening.

We are the unborn image: Hope is our unblown Flower:
white as the laughter of maidens, our contemplation.

We tingle with rosy mirth, in the dewy sunlight: *Flesh.*
chaste in the dripping pool,
we lave the Breast, and the dreamy Limbs, and the patient Eyes.

And we have dipped our smoothness, in the Holy Fountain:
we make the Sign of the Cross, on the templed Forehead.

Listen unto our song, in the fragrant twilight,
and you shall hear the murmurous humming of bees, drowsy with honey.

Sweet is our hushed delight, close folded in recollection:
we dream of our budding Beauty, bow to the dove-white Word.

And the Poet saith to his Fingers:

Peace to you, O my Fingers.

As the cool wind doth ripple the calm, of the twilight waters,
so doth your Beauty laugh, in my silent Heart.

Bless me, with the dew of your holy joy:
you are the Children, of the Eternal Rose.

And now, O mine Eyes,
cast your dreaming sight, on the curving Sides:
and gazing thereon I may learn, their hymn of worship.

Flesh. *Then his Sides say unto the Poet:*

We are the mystery of thy Flesh: we are thy Sides.

Palpitant in the golden noon, by the shore of the ocean,
revery doth repose, in our silences.

We are the Seraphim, of the Body's temple:
fair are our curves, as the lip of the crystal vase.

Verily Light, poureth not more pure from the dayspring,
than Color playeth, under our softened sheen.

Springlight runneth merrily, over our surface,
even as the shadow of a cloud, doth chase the lambs in the meadow.

We are brothers, unto the Morning Stars:
the wind, bringeth us tidings of their music.

The wind doth hearken, as we chaunt, in the open spaces:
Holy, Holy, Holy! to the Most High.

Yet know we not, the tides of our mystic being:
Form doth shape us, chaste, in wonder and fear.

Veiled is our adoration, and pure as trumpets afar:
we dream of our loveliness, bow to the dove-white Word.

And the Poet saith to his Sides:

Peace to you, O my Sides.

How you are gentle birds, sheltering under the eaves of the Temple:
the Heart heareth your song, and doth join in your prayer.

Wells of Love, would I might rest in your waters:
reflecting the Face of the Son, in your fathomless calm.

But now, O mine Eyes, turn to the mirroring waters:
cast your dreaming sight, on the flowing Back:
and gazing thereon I may learn, her shy reserve.

Then his Back saith to the Poet:

I am the arch of thy Flesh: I am thy Back,

flowing with ripple of Light, from the high calm beautiful Shoulders,
gravely down to the Haunches: and they are fair and strong.

The secret of pain, lieth hidden under my music:
suave as the petalled flower, is my Flesh.

Flesh. I am the curve of thy Body:
thy musical Word, is fulfilled in the voice of my Beauty:
in my smooth gray shadow, lieth the strange mystery of thy Will.

The pattern of Law, doth slumber in my texture:
thy Body's syllable, doth stir in my veins.

White in the circling rays of the summer morning, the Cross doth hide under my veil:
at evening I bend in prayer, and adoration.

Reverent are thy Fingers:
tremblingly they touch, the yielding hollows:
verily, I am a nest of stars.

I say unto thee,
if thou didst once know, the ineffable mystery of contact,
thou wouldst go lonely and silent, all thy days,

even as I lie silent, carrying thy Body's Syllable:
dream of the end of my silence, bow to the dove-white Word.

And the Poet saith to his Back:

Peace to thee, O my Back.

Often I dreamed of thee:
but now do I know, the secret of thy stillness.

Now am I glad in my youth,
for that I bear in thee
the shadow, of the first Syllable of the Name.

But do you, O mine Eyes,
cast your dreaming sight, on the glowing Thighs:
and gazing thereon I may learn, their equal poise.

Then his Thighs say unto the Poet:

We are the health of thy Flesh: we are thy Thighs.

As the elm doth flourish, expanding in fruitful vigor,
so are we, the sturdy trees of thy Body.

And we are nourished by hidden springs:
the sap doth circle, higher and ever higher,
as life doth run in the elm, rooted in fair hill pastures.

Urgent, with the tide of the flooding veins,
Matter riseth, unto the brim of our vessels.

Ebbing with inspiration, it sinketh into repose:
we are the living flowers, of thy Blood.

Flushed with fire, we lie in the summer grasses,
odorous, with twisted eglantine.

Flesh. Heat doth lap us, with singing tongues of flame:
the locust, doth alight on our glowing Flesh.

And then we come, to the murmuring pebbly brook:
cool as honey, it slaketh our burning sides.

We bear the words of thy secret eternal Organs, unto thy Body:
we dream of the end of birth, bow to the dove-white Word.

And the Poet saith to his Thighs:

Peace to you, O my Thighs.

Flame doth dwell in you, twin guardians of birth:
the flower of innocence, lieth furled in your music.

And you are the poise of my Flesh:
you are fair.

But now, O mine Eyes,
cast your dreaming sight, on the secret eternal Organs:
and gazing thereon I may learn, their awful creative music.

Then his creative Organs say unto the Poet: *Flesh.*

We are the gates of thy Flesh: we are thy secret eternal Organs.

Thou shalt reverence us, as the planets bow to their sun:
we are thy noblest, prayer.

Despise us not, for we say unto thee:
Thou shalt have Life hereafter, even as thou dost respect us now:
we are the gates, of thy Flesh.

The Soul hath its Seed, as the Body:
thou shalt sow, in fruitful ground,
warmed by grace, and watered with contemplation.

Thou art holy in us:
and we in thee.

We say unto thee:
See that thou conceal us not,
but guard us, with the seal of reverence.

As the heavenly host, are concealed by flaming ramparts:
so is the starry empyrean of thy Flesh, within our gates.

We are the archangels,
before thy throne.

Flesh. Prostrate, before the free will of thy creation,
we await thee:
dream of the end of our stillness, bow to the
dove-white Word.

And the Poet saith to his creative Organs:

Peace unto you.

In reverent silence I hearken, unto your admonition:
you are the archangels, of my Flesh.

Nor shall I now, conceal you,
but guard you, with the seal of reverence:
you are my noblest, prayer.

Now, O mine Eyes,
cast your dreaming sight, on the Legs, singing
of motion:
and gazing thereon I may learn, the hymn of
their advance.

Then his Legs say unto the Poet:

We are the pillars of thy Flesh: we are thy
Legs.

Motion doth sing in us, the hymn of thy Will:
urgent as grass, and the wheeling of planets,
thy Flesh groweth from us, and we from thy
Flesh.

Fair as the trunk of the beech, we swell from thy beautiful Ankles: *Flesh.*
the flexure of thy Knees. doth bend in freedom.

Moved by the Love that governeth the stars, we advance in graciousness:
we carry thee, to the goal of thy aspiration.

And humble, before the altar of thy dreams,
we kneel, in contemplation,
still as the Breath of Life, thou dost adore.

And we are fair in the dance:
we govern thy Body's poise, and her genuflections.

Thy Body's arch, doth rise from our endurance:
we spring from the passionate roots, of thy blossoming Flesh.

From thy Thighs with the health of thy Body, circling through their music,
our rhythm floweth down, to the gracious Feet.

Light poureth not more loveliness over the sky, than dreameth under the surface of our Flesh:
naked as Light, we lie on the sunny hill:
dream of the end of our motion, bow to the dove-white Word.

Flesh. *And the Poet saith to his Legs:*

Peace to you, O my Legs.

How you are sturdy and fair, in the grace of your motion:
you bear my Body, along the road to the sunrise.

And even as the sun climbeth unto the lofty zenith, and sinketh into the rosy waters of evening:
so do you climb through Light, and bear me to rest in the shadows.

But now, O mine Eyes,
cast your dreaming sight, on the chaste brown Feet:
and gazing thereon I may learn, their innocence.

Then his Feet say unto the Poet:

We are the roots of thy Flesh: we are thy Feet.

Thou shalt guard our path, and lead us unto the sunrise:
guide our steps, that we may bear thee with honor.

Bare us unto the winds, and the laughing waters:
uncover us, that we may touch thy mother, earth.

Gaze on our innocence, and thou shalt learn *Flesh.*
the mystery of touch:
thine Hands know not earth as we:
in our touch, lieth flame.

We are brown as the dust, living with recollection:
chaste as air, that flowereth in the breeze.

We are the perfect arches, of thy Body:
behold with joy, thy Soles and thy cushioned Heels.

Full-blown Flesh, doth shrine thy virgin Ankles:
behold their dreaming veins,
blue as the sky, or purple as grapes that flush on the vine.

Smile on us with thine Eyes, and thou shalt see
in the laughter of children at play, or the morning prayers of a maiden,
purity not more white, chastity not more tender.

Flowering dust are we, and dusky brown as our mother:
we dream of the end of our journey, bow to the dove-white Word.

And the Poet saith to his Feet:

Peace to you, O my Feet.

Into you now I commit, the passionate paths of my youth:
into your care do I set, the wingéd ways of my journey.

Flesh. I bare you unto the winds, and the laughing waters.
Lay your fairness upon our mother, earth.

And now, O mine Heart,
thou hast hearkened unto my voice, and heard the words of my music:
now fain would I listen to thee, and join in thy ardent prayer.

Then his Heart saith to the Poet:

I say unto thee:
Thou hast heard my prayer, in the song of thy Body's members.

Aspiration, doth ebb from thy Flesh in the evening:
inspiration, floodeth thy Flesh in the morning.

I am the moon, that ruleth the tides of thy Blood:
my prayer doth surge, in diastole and systole.

The will of thy Blood, doth urge thy coursing veins:
thy Blood is a book of planets, graven upon the constellations of thy Flesh.

No treasure is more precious, than thy Blood:
its Calvaries, redeem the spheres of thy Flesh.

I say unto thee, that every sand in thy Flesh hath its crucifixions: *Flesh.*
resurrection doth flower, from every drop of thy Blood.

Sand calleth out unto sand, and Flesh unto Flesh:
drop calleth out unto drop, and Blood unto Blood.

Vein doth sing unto vein, and beloved unto Beloved:
dream doth aspire unto Dream, and thy word unto the Word.

And the Word becometh Flesh, and dwelleth within thee:
thy Flesh is the divine Shadow, thy Blood doth utter the Name.

And his Blood saith:

The Flesh hath its sands, and the flame of its mother, earth:
The Blood doth purify, the Flesh, with its winds and tides.

Thy Body is what the will, of thy Flesh and Blood hath decreed:
thou art what sand and flame, and wind and tide have made thee.

Flesh. *Then his Flesh saith to the Poet:*

Thou art the ruler, of thy universe:
in the vast spaces between, the planets and stars of thy Flesh,
the Blood doth sing, in praise of the Most High.

Behold thy Flesh, in the Light of its seeded stars,
weaving in naked dance, the music of the spheres.

Light crieth out unto Light, across infinite spaces,
myriad songs arise, from the tips of thy Fingers.

In the curve of thy Foot, lieth a Milky Way:
streaming with music sweeter, than vanished adoration,
flooding with Love from afar, as it toucheth the sod.

Thine Eyes have depths unmeasured, by the flight of thine archangels:
thine Heart hath heights of prayer, that rise to the foot of the throne.

I say unto thee, that the song of thy Flesh never dieth:
there is no death,
nor doth change, quench the flame of her singing stars.

The stars of thy Flesh, when forgetfulness seemeth to come upon thee,
part and die into Light, combining in other songs.

Yet a day shall come, when the trumpet call of thy Will,
mingling with other Wills, in abandon of adoration,
shall summon thy stars again, to their old disposal,

and thou shalt arise in thy Flesh, mingling in Love with thy brethren:
resurrection shall flower in flame, unto the Father.

Dust unto dust thou shalt go, and Flesh unto Flower:
yet thou shalt flame at the end, in the image of the Son.

And the Spirit ruleth thee, through many changes:
the sod doth dream of thee, and thy coming hour.

Aspiration, streaming through inspiration, doth weave the first Syllable of the Name:
whereof thy Flesh and thy Blood, are the perfect shadow.

And aspiration flowereth in sex:
through the inspiration of sex, the Flesh is reborn.

Flesh. Wonder of Bridegroom and Bride,
Flesh calling out unto Flesh,
Light overflowing the dykes, of the heavenly ramparts,

trembling with wonder, and troubled with Beauty breathing,
how the Flesh is fair, unto the Eyes of the Lover,
and she shall know, the mystery of Hands.

And shrined in the Eyes of Lover and Beloved, each doth see the shining Face of the other:
the Face is the Sacrament of Flesh and Blood, outward and visible sign of inward grace.

Grace floweth out unto grace, and returneth in harmony:
the Eyes of the Lover, are the Spirit's music.

Thy Face doth shine, on sun and wind and waters:
they are what thou dost make them, with thy grace.

Thou shalt make thy Body, a garden of fair delights:
no harmony, is more pleasing to the Most High.

The Father created thee, and hath said thou art good, and hath rested from His labors:
guard thy Beauty, and offer it unto the Bridegroom.

There is no darker evil, than to neglect the Temple of thy Spirit: *Flesh.*
sweep it clean, and guard the holy gates.

Thou shalt do no despite, unto thy Body:
thou shalt not mortify thy Flesh:
thy Flesh, is the flaming habitation of the Holy Ghost.

Flesh and Blood, sing naked unto the Father:
the Morning Stars, join in their spheral chime.

The Son descendeth, naked into his tabernacle:
Eternal Beauty, flowereth in Time.

The Poet remaineth silent in adoration. Then he saith:

Peace to thee, O my Flesh.

Mine Heart calleth unto thy music,
and my Mouth doth give voice to thy song.

Thou art the substance which doth free: from mine Heart flow the waves of thy music:
flooding the heart of Heaven, they rise to the feet of God.

Thy movement is born of desire, and longing awful with silence:
thy movement dieth in Love, and the Heart of Eternal Rest.

Flesh. *He prayeth unto the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost:*

I give Thee thanks, that Thou hast led me out of the bitter ways, and unto peace:
vouchsafe of Thy Goodness strength, that I may redeem my Body, in the image of Thy Son in the tabernacle,
that Flesh and Blood in me, may become thy perfect praise.

And even as my Flesh is the shadow, of the first Syllable of Thy Word,
let Thy grace shine in my Heart:
for the Word becometh Flesh, and dwelleth within me.

FLOWER.

To Paul Claudel

The Poet, naked on a sunny Hill, speaketh to a little Flower:

Little Flower, open thine heart and tell me, why
thou dost smile and blow in thine innocence:
thou art gentle as laughter, and pure as the
wonder of children.

Why art thou so wise, and fair in the Grasses?
Thou art little as Love, and fragrant as meditation.

Sunlight laugheth on thy Flesh, and on mine:
Little brother Flower, whisper to me thy secret.

And the little Flower doth answer the Poet:

Brother Poet, I laugh that thy Flesh is fair:
I laugh that Grass is green, and the Wind is cool:
I laugh at Color and Light, in adoration.

The Father dreameth of me: I dream in the veins of the Son:
the Spirit guardeth the shadow of thy Word, in the channels of my petals.

Flower. Even as yesternoon thy Flesh hath told thee,
the Word of thy Body, naked and unashamed:
so thou hast shaped my Beauty, in thine image.

Flesh unto Flower, floweth in silent Music:
Flower smileth at Flesh, doth dream of the morrow.

Light streameth forth, from thy silent countenance:
alas, and shadow darkeneth thine Eyes.

In the Light of thine holiness, our face is fair:
thy shadow cloudeth the Sky, we shine no longer.

Sun and Wind and Water, are even as thou dost make them;
thy Flesh doth reveal to us, the Word that we adore.

Then the Poet saith to his Flesh:

O my Flesh, fair living temple of my wingéd Soul,
how thou art brown and fair, with ripple of Light upon thee.

Beautiful unto tears, thou dost lie in the fragrant Grasses,
high on the sunny Hill, against the blue of the Sea.

Thou art the Foam of Light, even as the little blowing Flowers around thee: *Flower.*
Grass and Waters and Air, are the nest of thy gentle Limbs.

How shall the Flower of Beauty, open to me her secret?
Tell me, O Flesh in flower, the Word that I must say.

And his Flesh doth answer the Poet:

Flower and Flesh are fair, as thou dost create their Beauty:
dream of Flesh and Flower, in the image of the Word.

Flower shadoweth Flesh, as Flesh doth shadow the Word:
be thou pure and create, Earth and Waters and Sky.

For art thou not a Poet, and brother of all that shineth?
Speak to Earth and Waters and Sky, and thou shalt hear.

The Poet turneth unto the Earth, and burieth his Face in her Grasses. He lieth silent in wonder; then he saith:

Far-flaming Mother Earth, thou who hast borne me in silence,
under the garment of Dust, and glowing dream;

Flower. Guardian Mother Earth, with brown eyes of compassion,
thy bosom is warm, and familiar as Music in dusky ways.

If I have ever loved thee, O Mother Earth,
hearken unto thy child,
and cast thine eyes, on the Flesh that thou hast borne.

Verily thou art gentle, as doves in the twilight:
grant thy tired child, rest in the dream of thy breast.

Fain would I return, home to the heart of our memories:
hear the prayer of the Sod, and the murmurous Grasses;

breathe the forgotten dreams, of thy fragrant Flowers;
Body to trunk, enclasp the singing Tree;

the song of Hill and Plain, and the running Hollows,
murmur and rustle and silence, would I hear.

And the Earth saith unto the Poet:

Peace to thee, O my child.

Lay thine Ear to the Sod: the rumorous Dust shall whisper
tidings unto thine Heart, of the lucid fountain of dreams.

Bury thy Face in the Grasses: flocks of angels are rustling *Flower.*
before the shining steps, of the heavenly Bridegroom.

Flesh and bark of the Tree, clasp one another as brothers!
The quivering Birch, hath a streaming message for thee.

Lower thine Eyes and pray, to the heart of the little Flower:
guide thy Feet, over shadowy Plains and Mountains:
Body to body, yield thy Flesh to my Dust and forgotten Flame.

And, as the Poet doth hearken, the Sod saith:

Brother Flesh, with the fair delight of thy Beauty upon thee,
Flame of birth doth glow, in thine Heart and in mine.

Spring doth arise in my bosom, in burning Fires of silence:
It toucheth the wingéd Seed: she taketh root in me.

Summer floweth in Light, and the mystery of Rains:
she dreameth within my Dust, and I flower in Color.

Flower. And then cometh Autumn, rich in the yield my dream hath rendered:
Fire gloweth deep, and lieth under my Body.

And Winter bringeth slumber, unto the Flesh forsaken:
she resteth under the hope, of the coming Spring.

I say unto thee: thy Flesh and the Dust are the substance of Music:
speed doth flower in stillness, into form.

The Sons of the Morning, sing from thy starry Flesh
unto the Daughters of Evening, under the starry Sod.

Dust unto Dust doth sing, and Sod unto glowing Body:
and one day thou shalt join, in my flaming Spring.

Love the Dust, as thou dost love thy Beauty:
one day thou shalt flower, in the Clay.

And the hour cometh, when we shall arise in the morning,
and flame on high, in the Light of the Morning Stars.

Brother Flesh, with the fair delight of thy
Beauty upon thee,
Tides of laughter, flow in our veins and in
thine.

We are an emerald forest. The locust doth
sing in our bowers.
Lose thine Heart, in our shadowy green aisles.

Breath of fragrance dreameth, under our shel-
tered slumbers:
even as incense, before the Face of the Father.

We are the little crying, Flames of Earth,
rising in song, through the stillness of brown
Sod breaking

reverently, in Fire of consuming worship
mingled with Music of Color and whisper of
Rain.

Wind, weaveth our dance with the dance of the
angels,
rushing, in laughter of praise and adoration,
down our curving lanes, and secret windings.

Stillness of summer heat, in the golden noon-
tide
lieth deep, on our little thrusting blades,
radiant and lithe, in the magic fragrance.

And after the mystery, of veiling Rain,
we are cool as joy, to thy shadowy Flesh.

Flower. We play with the Seraphim, of thy Body's temple:
we are the angels of Dust, to thee and thine.

Then the Flowers in the Grasses sing:

Brother Flesh, with the fair delight of thy Beauty upon thee,
dance with us in wonder, before the Son.

Low in the rumorous Grasses, we run from the Sod,
even as thou, though remembrance doth pull on our heartstrings.

Rain filleth our dreams, with forgotten Beauty,
echoes of long ago, and departed Earth-flames.

We are little Flowers, alone in the Grasses:
we laugh, at the Sun and the Larks and the silver Clouds.

Shy Light, doth flood through our azure veins:
the fair Limbs of the Son,
tremble with Beauty, and bloom in the song of our fragrance.

Windy Waters, and streaming rivers of Air,
inhale the Blossom, of the immortal Rose,
spreading His Petals, over the dreaming starlight.

The naked Beauty, of thy glorious Flesh, *Flower.*
mixeth Music with Clay,
and we are born, in the image of her singing.

And in the depths of our loveliness, sadder than Dust forsaken,
Crucifixions flower, in ecstasy of abandon,
Constellations call unto one another, in anguish of surrender, dying into the sound of Eternal Light.

Then the Trees sing:

Brother Flesh, with the fair delight of thy Beauty upon thee,
hearken unto the choir, of our singing boughs.

And if ever thine Heart hath longed, to return to the heart of thy Mother,
come unto us and surrender, thy Body into our keeping,
for we are the prayer of thy Mother, Earth, on the edge of Time.

Arise in thy brown array, and join us in adoration,
Body to body, under the sunny Leaves.

Clasp our trunks, weaving the dance of spring-light,
ripple of Color, and curve of Limbs and boughs.

Flower. We are the limit of Lands, high as the flaming angels,
bowing and rushing with Wind, the Tides of sap in our branches,

hushing at twilight, into the evening silence,
breathless with wonder, under the midnight Stars.

Tidings of Spring, circle under our surface,
rising in summer Heat, and falling in autumn Color,
darkling deep into Flame, in the winter stillness.

Enter us, casting thine Heart behind thee:
enter into our bosom, serene and unafraid.

Forth from our branches glancing, Light shall glisten upon thee:
Love shall wrap thee round, with the Flower of the living Flame.

Then the Mountains sing:

How thou art fair, O Flesh, with the fragrance of Light upon thee:
turn thine Eyes unto our Beauty, gaze on high.

Shadow stealeth away, from our slopes as the sunlight passeth,
over the golden path, of the silent Ocean:

passeth over thy Flesh, reclining in azure pastures,
passeth into the Heavens, dreaming of resurrection.

Out of the Dream which bore thee, into the Flame of Longing,
thy Beauty passeth in Light, and flowing of Wind:

into the woven Flower, of Light and Wind and Waters,
out of thine holy Flesh, passeth the imaged Word.

We are the fairest Fruit, of thy longing and aspiration:
the mist of loveliness, exhaleth from our dreams.

And we are thy Mother's breasts, rising and falling in Beauty,
rich and fair, and soft in shapeliness.

Lay thine Heart, on the heart of thy Mother, Earth:
Breast to breast, enter into her silence,
home from loneliness, and the foreign men.

Lo! thou art weeping! Come, my tired child!
Come to thy Mother, and tell her thy little secrets!
Rest thine Head on my bosom! Hush thee, and sleep!

Flower. *And the Poet saith in his Flesh:*

Now will I arise, and enter into thy Beauty:
for I have loved thee, Flesh of my living Flesh.

And if ever a prayer doth flower in thine Heart,
to springs of remembrance,
lull me to dreams, of the everlasting Spring.

Bathe mine Eyes, in the crystal fountain of pity:
give me to drink, of the silver Waters of Light.

Lay on mine Heart, the compelling Flame of thy Music:
strengthen my Will, to flower in liquid Fire;

that I may touch the Hearts, of the foreign men:
lead their Flame unto thine, from the foreign wars.

The Poet lieth silent in prayer for a little space. He turneth unto the Waters; then he saith:

Far-flowing Waters of Earth, with the sorrow of Life in thy Music,
under the ebb and flow, of thy passionate Waves and Tides:

wild-singing Waters of Ocean, thundering Law eternal,
on the strand of the silent Earth, who hearkeneth unto your cry:

why are you crying, crying, sobbing under your surges,
weaving the warp and the woof, of the dying Waves?

And why, O Water-Brooks, with the merry shake in your laughter,
why do you sing of joy, as you dance in the rippling sunlight?

Teach me thy gracious poise, O Pool with the eyes of a child:
bear me swiftly and far, through pastures of recollection,
River of peace and Light, flowing unto the Tide.

And O ye Lakes and Fountains, still as immortal silence,
cast your mantle of grace, on my glowing Body.

Water, cool and clear, fold thy fairness about me:
wrap my flowering Flesh, in the sheath of thy candid Streams.

And the Waters say to the Poet:

Peace to thee, fair child.

Dip thy Face in the Pool: her silver laughter shall whisper
tidings unto thine Heart, of the lucid fountain of dreams.

Flower. Set thy brown Feet in the Water-Brooks: the wings of thine angel are rustling
before the shining steps, of the heavenly Bridegroom.

Flesh and Light of the Lake, stroke one another as brothers:
the quivering Waters, have a message for thee.

Lower thine Eyes, to the marge of the brimming River:
guide thy Feet, to the shores of the murmuring Ocean:
Body to body, yield thy Flesh to my Tide and forgotten dream.

And, as the Poet doth hearken, the Pool saith:

Brother Flesh, with the fair delight of thy Beauty upon thee,
how thine image is fair, in my placid Waters.

Even as Light doth brood, in the Heart of my silences,
so doth thine image reflect on my surface, the Form of the Son.

The Spirit in thee, doth rest on the face of the Waters:
creation floweth in circles, from thine Eyes.

into my depths commit, the Flower of thy Body:
we are at peace, in the mystery of twilight.

Love thy Beauty, and bow in adoration: *Flower.*
lower thine Eyes and fear, for an angel hath troubled my surface,

and lo! Christ walketh again, on the holy Waters:
a Wind of angels hath passed, and all is still.

Flaming with Love, awakened in white rejoicing,
Color stealeth, across my lucid peace,

dawneth in hues, rich as the soul of a Violet,
fair as the veins, at the heart of a Folded Rose.

Rejoice, O Earth and Sun, rejoice, O Airs and Grasses,
the Flower of Color and Light, is born again in Time,

the Mystical Rose hath blown, her petals open in wonder,
Flesh doth flower in Light, and Water receiveth a Sign.

Then the Water-Brook doth sing:

Brother Flesh, with the fair delight of thy Beauty upon thee,
hearken unto my song, of laughing joy.

Brown Feet, brown Feet, come unto my shallows,
Water lappeth your Ankles, arched in my crystal stream.

Flower. Dip thine Hands, in flowing silver Music:
bathe thine Eyes, in euphrasy of sunlight.

Floating, floating, Flower of golden noonday,
glide along my currents, shadowing my Sands.

Day is streaming past us, on into the sunrise,
laugh and sing in moonlight, morning dawneth far.

Cool as recollection, soft as meditation,
Water floweth with thee, Time doth glide away.

Far into the sunrise, Light and Water bear thee,
home into the dawning, Flower unto Wind.

The Morning Stars before us, the song of Larks above us,
Wind in Flower flameth: the Son is on the Sky.

Holy! holy! holy! flaming Flower of sunrise,
how my Heart hath borne me, unto Ocean strands.

Holy! holy! holy! streaming Flesh in Flower,
Light hath risen fresh, and floweth o'er the Lands.

Then the Lake doth sing:

Brother Flesh, with the fair delight of thy Beauty upon thee,
dip thy Side, in my lonely rippling Light.

Thy Mother, Earth, lieth still, in the mystery of the Godhead:
silence slowly trembleth, into passionate sound.

Even as thou art, awful in Flesh and Flower,
lay thine holy smoothness, upon my windless Waters.

stir my dreaming stillness, with loveliness immortal:
curve unto circling curve, weave the pattern of wonder:

widening to spheres of Light, and singing rhythm,
flowing into the sunset, Bridegroom unto the Bride,
reverently touching, Flesh doth marry the Word.

And O, if ever thine Heart hath longed, for Beauty white and eternal,
fair as the Face of the Father, and sad as the Eyes of the Son,

bury thy Love in my Skies, ensphered on my glowing Waters,
yield thy passionate prayer, in lucid reflection:
flower in Wind and Sky, and Color of Spring.

April, April, laugheth upon my bosom:
white April flowereth, in Blossom and Clouds of Spring:

April, April, laugheth in flowery showers,
holy April streameth, in Light before the King.

Flower. *Then the Rivers sing:*

Brother Flesh, with the fair delight of thy Beauty upon thee,
lo! we have journeyed together, out of the walls of Time.

Dost thou recall the morning, under the blossomy Branches,
when we rejoiced together, as Galahad rode by?

Out of the singing sunrise, Wind and Water streaming,
Light fell on thine Eyelids, Dawn flowered in prayer.

Flowers ran in gladness, through thy golden pastures,
Flowers laughed and dreamed, within thy dawning Eyes.

Stars flew over our Flesh, Stars sang in our Blood,
the angels bowed in awe, before thy flaming Throne.

Instant as recollection, flowing over our Bosom,
the Host arose in our Body, and there was silence in Heaven.

And raising thy star-soft Eyes, they beheld the Feet of the Son,
gently walking the Waters, clad with Flowers and Foam.

Flesh unto Flower of April, and Flame unto Autumn Wind, *Flower.*
circling veins of Music, rose around the Son,

Light with Beauty breathing, Body unto Body,
Flame of Love consuming, Flesh and Flower in Tide,

Lover clasping Lover, naked Bride and Bridegroom,
Word and Flesh commingling, Eternity in Time.

Then the Ocean doth sing:

Brother Flesh, with the fair delight of thy Beauty upon thee,
why art thou silent and still, in the Light of my murmurous Sands?

Thine Heart hath led thy steps, to the ways of the Sea:
down to the salt sea ways, out of shining pastures.

I say unto thee, Arise! thine hour hath come!
Plunge thy singing Limbs, in the roar of my surges!

Even as thy Flesh is pure, in the sight of the Father,
enter into the prayer, of my living Waters.

Flower. Follow the land Wind, over the shining sun-path:
bathe in unknown Seas, by forgotten Lands.

Borne over streaming Waters, to far horizons,
die into living Day, from singing Foam.

Ebb on with me, across the sunset Tide,
and float, beyond the Waters of the world,

the Light of evening, slipping from thy Side,
thy softened Voice, in waves of silence furled.

Flow on, into the flaming morning wine,
drowning the Land in Color. Then on high

rise in thy candid innocence, and shine
like to a poplar, straight against the Sky.

And the Poet saith in his Flesh:

Now will I arise, and enter into thy Beauty:
for I have loved thee, Tide of the living Tide.

And if ever a prayer doth flow from thine Heart, in waves of compassion,
bear me away, into everlasting Summer.

Bathe mine Eyes, in the azure Waters of purity:
give me to drink, of the opal Waters of Light.

Lay on mine Heart, the compelling flood of thy Music:
strengthen my Will, to pour forth liquid Fire;

that I may touch the Hearts, who know thee not: *Flower.*
lead them home to thee, from foreign strands.

The Poet lieth silent in prayer again for a little space. He turneth unto the Airs of Heaven; then he saith:

Far-flying Airs of Heaven, shrining the Son in silence,
under the streaming Light, of your awful Arch,

guardian angels, of Flesh and Flower and Foam,
your eyes are fair and soft, as those of your Mother enskied.

What are the words of the Winds, as they sweep through the Clouds and the Grasses?
What do they sing to the Waters, that echo their sounding hymn?

Prostrate in adoration, before the Host on thine altar,
what is the heart of thy mystery, Light, O streaming Grail?

And O thou flaming image, of naked pity,
what dost thou say to mine Eyes, O Sun on high?

Flower. Teach me thy silver Music, O lady Moon,
guiding the wanderer home, over shadowy Waters,
shy as immortal loveliness, gone by.

Wind, Light, Sun and Moon, and singing starry chorus,
of whom do you dream, before the radiant Throne?

And the Airs of Heaven say to the Poet:

Peace to thee, dear child.

Strip thy Flesh to the Wind: the rippling Breezes shall whisper
tidings unto thine Heart, of the lucid fountain of dreams.

Bare thy Body unto the Light: pinions of Flame are rustling
before the shining steps, of the heavenly Bridegroom.

Flesh and Flower of the Sun, mingle together as lovers:
the quivering sunlight, hath a message for thee.

Lower thine Eyes and pray, to the heart of our lady Moon:
lift thine Heart, to the chant of the Morning Stars:
Body to body, yield thy Flesh to our Light and forgotten Word.

And as the Poet doth hearken, the Winds sing:

Brother Flesh, with the fair delight of thy Beauty upon thee,
hearken unto the Winds, that blow the Stars to Flame.

Bend thine Ear unto the Winds, that bear thee forgotten tidings:
unto the starry Winds, that bring thee tidings of joy.

The sorrow, and the silence of dying worlds,
cry unto thee from the Stars, O Flesh in Flower.

Out of thine Heart doth flow, the Will of our restless journey:
into thine Heart doth return, the answering message for thee.

North, south, east, west, we bring thee the choirings of Heaven:
we are the captains of Light, weaving the Morning Stars.

Arise in thy Light and come, with gladness over the evening:
stream with us in joy, over the flaming ramparts!

Bathed in the Music, of Planets in adoration,
weave the web of the Stars, O Son of the Morning!

Flower. All creation shall flow from thy flute, if thou dost breathe desire:
play on thy trembling Flesh, in the Light of loveliness.

Arise, O Flesh, in color, and warm with rosy wonder,
enter into the chorus, guide the flaming hymn,

till the Rose of the World shall flower, in ecstasy of abandon,
and Light shall seal thine Eyelids, with the Wind of the Father's Eyes!

Then Light doth sing:

Brother Flesh, with the fair delight of thy Beauty upon thee,
still, and whiter than morning on the Hills,

smile on thy brother Light, who hovereth over thy fairness:
silver Clouds of joy, are flocking across thy Bosom.

Rippling streams of wonder, flow in thine azure channels:
the soft transparence of evening, watcheth under thy Veins.

Dream of windy Light, in the haunted Meadows:
dream of sunlight, in flower across the Plain.

Behold! the Eyes of the Bridegroom, are smiling upon thee, *Flower.*
lovely brimming Waters, of solitude.

Thou art the Light, of the shadow-haunted Dayspring:
thy Color floweth, in and out of the Firmament.

Weave me into thy songs, and offer them unto the Father:
so shall I not have woven, my song in vain.

Dawn doth dream in thy pattern, to hidden flowerings:
the secrecy of Night, curleth within thy Blood.

Flaming Dust, awful in lonely Beauty,
lend me thy nakedness, that I may die,

and rising, fulfilled in Flesh, as the Will of the Father commandeth,
I may shine in deed, as through thee I now shine in the Word.

Then the Sun doth sing:

Brother Flesh, with the fair delight of thy Beauty upon thee,
come to me over the Waters, clad with Flowers and Foam.

And if ever thy flaming Heart hath longed, for the flaming Heart of the Sun,
come unto thy desire, visioned within thy Blood.

Flower. Rising in golden silence, out of thy mother Night,
the pure and shimmering Host, shineth over the silver Waters,

setting in golden Music, into the clouded West,
passionate with awe, before the burning Grail.

Thy Body uplifteth my Light, as a monstrance over the Waters:
thou art within my arms, as the Word in the Tabernacle.

Arise, my Love, my Dove, and shine forth over the heavens:
Arise, my Love, and come, to the nest of the Wind and Stars.

Arise in thy brown array, from the Sod and the murmurous Grasses:
Arise from the branching Boughs, and the whispering ways of the Forest.

Arise from the laughing Brooks, and the haunted Pools of silence:
arise, my Dove, and come, to the fountain of the Dayspring.

Arise in thy glowing Flesh, from the streaming Rivers of morning:
arise from the passionate Waters, in Light and laughter of Flame.

For behold! the Bridegroom cometh, across the still Airs of twilight: *Flower.*
He cometh unto the Bride, in Wind and whisper of Rain.

Then the Moon doth sing:

Brother Flesh, with the fair delight of thy Beauty upon thee,
I am thine image in loneliness, I am thy guarded dream.

I am the kindness of Time, shining over eternal forests:
tender as maiden prayer, and gentler than adoration.

Dost thou recall, the earliest hint of Autumn:
the first faint coolness, of recollected evenings?

Out of thy Body trembled, the ripple of moonlight Waters,
rich and very full, with the silent promise of harvest.

Then rest thee, rest thee, softly in thy slumbers:
white Light shall cradle, all thy flowing Limbs.

Light upon thy Bosom, lieth gently sleeping:
floodeth all thy visions, with the flight of wings.

Light along thine Arms, runneth to thy Fingers:
the Flower of Beauty bloweth, in the windy Airs.

Flower. Light in thy Flesh, and thy Blood, chaunteth her starry secrets:
Light in thy veinéd Eyes, dreameth of resurrection.

Light! Light! Light! dying in Color and Music!
Light on the fragrant Shore! Light in the Stars and the Sod!

Light running over thy foamy Side, laughing and dreaming in Color!
Light lying still on thy Flesh, the naked Shadow of God!

Then the Morning Stars arise and sing:

How thou art fair, O Flesh, with the fragrance of Light upon thee!
We bow with Heaven and Earth, before thy flaming Throne.

Lift thine Eyes and smile! The Stars on the windless Waters,
veil their faces before thee, O shadow of Light in Time!

Arise, O daughters of Evening, under the starry Sod!
Proclaim to the silent Airs, the rumor of heavenly Spring!

The Winter is over and gone: the Seed doth flower in the heavens:
unfurl upon the Sky, the banner of the Stars!

For lo! the holy Dove, flieth over the listening Waters: *Flower.*
the breathless Airs, are rumorous with wings!

Flame in the frozen Earth, O budding Flowers of springlight!
Rise in your green delight, and hail the risen King!

Flame in the crying surges, secret Tides of April!
Cover the Land with Foam, and laughter of living Spring!

Flame in the heights and the deeps, Wind and Waters obeying!
Flame on the Hills and the Plain! Flame on the dreaming Snows!

Flame, O Sun and Moon! Flame, expiring Planets!
Flame with the Seraphim, in the heart of the Mystical Rose!

Flame, O Death and Birth, in the Body's passionate wars!
Flame, O Word made Flesh, in the Light of the Morning Stars!

And the Poet saith in his Flesh:

Now will I arise, and enter into thy Beauty:
for I have loved thee, Light of the living Light.

Flower. And if ever a prayer doth flame in thine Heart, to fires of Love,
bear me away, into everlasting Day.

Bathe mine Eyes, in the healing Waters of Beauty:
give me to drink, of the living Waters of Life.

Lay on mine Heart, the compelling Flower of thy Music;
strengthen my Will, to flame in liquid Fire;

that I may touch the Hearts, who live in Time:
lead them home to the Light, from foreign plains.

And his Flesh saith unto the Poet:

Flower and Flesh are fair, as thou dost create their Beauty:
dream of Flesh and Flower, in the image of the Word.

Flower shadoweth Flesh, as Flesh doth shadow the Word:
be thou pure and create, Earth and Waters and Sky.

Then the little Flower saith:

Brother Poet, with the fair delight of thy beautiful Flesh,
behold! I have told thee the song, thy Body and Soul have woven,
out of Earth and Water, and windy Airs of Time.

I am the golden shadow, of thy Spirit: *Flower.*
gaze in my shining cup, and thou shalt see
the image of thy Beauty, in its petals.

And even as thou art Body and Blood, in the Image
of the Sacred Body incarnate, of the Son,

so is thy daughter Nature, born of thy dreaming,
Body and Blood in thine image, Color and Light.

Out of my tiny heart, thine Eyes shall see
the Sacred Body, pulsing in starry tune,
if thou art pure and humble, as a Flower.

The Beauty of Sea and Sod, and flowering Sky,
is the trembling, of thy Beauty's adoration,
dreaming of thine own loveliness, in Time.

And adoration, flowereth in Matter,
whose awful motion, hardeneth into stillness.

For I say unto thee that thine Eyes, may not see the speed of thy weaving,
and live to know, thy naked loveliness.

And I say unto thee,
that Nature is nought but the Word, of thy Body's emanation
uttered eternally, on the shores of Time.

But the meaning of that Word, is long forgotten,
till passion of dying Beauty, createth Flame.

Flower. Arise in thy Body's passion, of creation,
clothing itself in images, as God

doth clothe His Body, through all eternity,
in the passion of naked Beauty, and dying worlds.

Spell thy Body, upon the flaming Sky,
spell it in adoration, upon the Stars,
spell it in Earth and Waters, and windy Airs,

and lo! their Beauty, shall tremble in thine image,
and the speed of thy dreams, shall harden into Form.

Give thy Body gladly, with a prayer,
till Life turns inward, to the heart of silence.
So shalt thou at last, know white horizons.

Gaze at Sun and Sod, in contemplation;
smile at Beauty gladly, Face to face,
twin mirrors, of a single singing Dream.

Let the white magic, of thine holy Music,
weave Woods and Fountains, in thy Body's prayer.

For the day is nigh, when thy Morning Stars shall sing
their lives away with thee, to the Living God.

The Poet remaineth silent in adoration. Then he saith: Flower.

Peace to thee, O Flower of my living Flesh.

Mine Heart doth utter thy Music,
and my Mouth doth give voice to thy song.

Even as yesternoon my Flesh hath told me, the Word of my Body, naked and unashamed:
so have I shaped thy Beauty, in the Image
of the Son whose Shadow shineth, in Flesh and Flower.

And he prayeth unto the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost:

I give Thee thanks, that Thou hast woven from me,
the Flower of Thy living Image, in my Flesh;

and even as my Flesh doth flower, in Sun and Wind and Waters,
uttering the Second Syllable, of Thy Word,

let the Flower of Thy Grace shine in mine Heart, and open its petals over the arching heavens;
for the Word becometh Flesh, and dwelleth within me.

LYRICS.

THE WHISPER OF EARTH.

A Lucien Rolmer.

IN the misty hollow shyly greening branches
Soften to the south wind, bending to the rain.
From the moistened earthland flutter little whispers,
Breathing hidden beauty, innocent of stain.

Little plucking fingers tremble through the grasses,
Little silent voices sigh the dawn of spring,
Little burning earth-flames break the awful stillness,
Little crying wind-sounds come before the King.

Powers, dominations urge the budding of the crocus,
Cherubim are singing in the moist cool stone,
Seraphim are calling through the channels of the lily,
God has heard the earth-cry and journeys to His throne.

IRISH.

To Bliss Carman.

MY father and mother were Irish,
And I am Irish, too;
I pipe you my bag of whistles,
And it is Irish, too.

Irish.

'T will sing with you in the morning,
And play with you at noon,
And dance with you in the evening
To a little Irish tune.

For my father and mother were Irish,
And I am Irish, too;
And here is my bag of whistles,
For it is Irish, too.

THE MESSENGER.

To Algernon Blackwood.

SPRING on his eyelids,
And spring on his heart,
The sunlight of April
Set him apart.

Fairer than twilight,
And softer than dew,
The goal of his longing
He never knew.

But once in the evening
When earth lay in prayer,
A breeze from the westward
Stole over his hair.

TO THE FOREST WAYS.

To Walter de la Mare.

I

FAIR-WINGÉD angel of the dreaming trees,
Adoring power of loneliness and light,
From out the forest of thy memories
The mystery of twilight streameth bright.
Thine eyes are soft with laughter, heaven above
Haunteth thy presence with her rich repose,
Where woodways, rumorous with silence, free
The starry-bodied dove,
Whose quivering worship, like stilled music, flows
Into the distant heart of ecstasy.

II

There is a magic spell upon the wind,
As though all dust were flaming into sound.
The brooding hour of slumber now doth bind
Wild beauty into pattern on the ground,
Whilst thou, the mother of auspicious sleep
And sacred dreaming, bendest over sod
And leaf and bud in fond solicitude,
And where dim shadows leap,
Hushed wings reveal the passing of a god
Across the forest's rustling solitude.

III

I fly with thee far down the forest ways,
Immortal stillness dripping from the leaves,
To lie with thee eternal nights and days
Beneath the boughs the flooding moonlight grieves,

And waken with white fragrance on the wind,
To hear the rushing of the crested trees
Along the flowing furrows of the air,
But turn in vain to find
The vision vanished where the distance frees
The ancient path that lures me where, oh, where?

THE PIPING MOUNTAINY MAN.

To Josephine Peabody Marks.

AS I came over the April hills
And over the April plain,
I saw a twinkle of white-limbed boys
In a shower of April rain.

A drift of shining fair-limbed boys
In the light of an April shower
Were dancing around a mountainy man
Like the petals of a flower.

A wind came over the April hills
And over the April rain;
The sunlight laughed from an April cloud
And the Spring laughed back again.

The mountainy man arose and piped
A skirling on the wind,
And the drift of shining white-limbed boys
Came skipping along behind.

They followed him over the meadows, *The Piping Mountainy Man.*
And sang by the running rills,
And danced with him in the sunlight,
And laughed with him on the hills,

Till they came to the edge of the ocean,
And ran to the end of the lea,
Where they dance on the rippling waters,
And run on the sands of the sea.

HOMEWAYS.

To Fiona.

WIND from the waters
And light from the foam
Through the branches of alder
Shall beckon thee home.

In the sigh of the twilight,
The dropping of dew
Shall soften thy knowledge,
And shape it anew

To a vessel of wonder,
A cup of desire,
Warm with thy fragrance
And white in thy fire.

ROMANY LOVE SONG.

To Roy Mortimer Newman.

SPRINKLE dew from the sky
On the eyes of thy love.
Scatter light from on high
On the wings of the dove.

Dark is the town,
And dark are its men,
But white shining down
Are the stars of the glen.

Lay thy brown body
To brown earth's breast.
Dust unto dúst cometh
Seeking its rest.

LIGHT TRANSMUTED.

WHITE wind and a flame
'Twixt a breath and a breath,
And the silence of foam
From the caverns of death.

A flood in our veins
Of lilies and light,
And the rushing of rains
Through the stillness of night.

Light from the waters
Is veiling the skies:
She laughs with the flowers
That dream in her eyes.

THE SHEPHERD BOY.

To Grace Clark.

I SAW him naked on a hill
Above a world of gold,
And coming by, so still, so still,
The sheep within his fold.

He strode along that golden air,
A rosy-bodied fool,
With wonder-dripping dreams as fair
As starlight in a pool.

He sang of old, forgotten springs
Of worship in the sky,
And longing passionate with wings,
And vision that must die.

His body and his spirit glowed
For joy that they were one,
And from his heart the music flowed
Into the setting sun.

I hurried as the light grew dim,
And left him far behind,
Yet still I heard his joyous hymn
Come faintly down the wind.

MAGIC.

To W. S. B.

I RAN into the sunset light
As hard as I could run:
The treetops bowed in sheer delight
As if they loved the sun:
And all the songs of little birds
Who laughed and cried in silver words
Were joined as they were one.

And down the streaming golden sky
A lark came circling with a cry
Of wonder-weaving joy:
And all the arch of heaven rang
Where meadowlands of dreaming hang
As when I was a boy.

And through the ringing solitude
In pulsing lovely amplitude
A mist hung in a shroud,
As though the light of loneliness
Turned pure delight to holiness,
And bathed it in a cloud.

I stripped my laughing body bare
And plunged into that holy air
That washed me like a sea,
And raced against its silver tide
That stroked my eager glancing side
And made my spirit free.

Across the limits of the land
The wind and I swept hand in hand
Beyond the golden glow.
We danced across the ocean plain
Like thrushes singing in the rain
A song of long ago.

And on into the silver night
We strove to win the race with light
And bring the vision home,
And bring the wonder home again
Unto the sleeping eyes of men
Across the singing foam.

And down the river of the world
Our glowing limbs in glory swirled
As spring within a flower,
And stars in music of delight
Streamed gayly down our shoulders white
Like petals in a shower.

And tears of awful wonder ran
Adown my cheeks to hear the clan
Of beauty chaunting white
The prayer too deep for living word
Or sight of man or winging bird
Or music over forest heard
At falling of the night.

And dropping slowly as the dew
On grasses that the winds renew
In urge of flooding fire,
And softly as the hushing boughs
The gentle airs of dawn arouse
To cradle morning's quire,

Magic.

The murmur of the singing leaves
Around the secret Flame,
Like mating swallows 'neath the eaves,
In rustling silence came,
And flowing through the silent air
Creation fluttered in a prayer
Descending on a spiral stair
And calling me by name.

It nestled in my dreaming eyes
Like heaven in a lake,
And softened hope into surprise
For very beauty's sake,
And silence blossomed into morn
Whose fragrant rosy-breasted dawn
Could scarcely bear to break.

I sang into the morning light
As loud as I could sing,
The treetops bowed in sheer delight
Before a slanting wing,
And all the songs of little birds
Who laughed and cried in silver words
Adored the Risen Spring.

SONG.

To Padraic Colum.

FAIR body, flower not in vain,
Nor let thy beauty rust,
When April flowers and April rain
Renew thy dreaming dust.

Let passion vanish down the sky
And flame consume desire,
Until the morning stars on high
Shall hymn thy beauty's fire.

So shalt thou bud in April rain
And bloom in April dust:
Fair body, flower not in vain,
Nor let thy beauty rust.

TO AN APRIL SKYLARK.

To L. I. G.

IN thy soft-limbed cherry-tree
Blossoming beside the sea,
Art thou laughing at a cloud?
Thy mate is circling silver-loud.

The golden-petalled cup of dawn
Hath never held a whiter morn
Mirrored in a skylark's eyes
Twinkling silver-soft surprise.

Laughing down a merry hill
Every ray doth beauty spill.
White and singing from the sun
The happy streams of beauty run.

Little honey-haunted throat,
Cease thy golden-fluted note.
By the silence of the sea
In thy dreaming cherry-tree

To an April Skylark.

Mingle wonder with thy song.
Love be silent, life is long.
Then thy music in a prayer
Shall soften all the singing air

Into wonder white as thine,
White as dreams within a shrine,
Clear as music from a cloud. —
So thy song saith silver-loud.

Oxford Meadows, Eastertide, 1914.

THE BRIM.

To Burton Kline.

HE lay on the edge of the morning
And laughed at the ocean lands,
And all the light from the dayspring
Was brimming in his hands.

Wind from the flowering starlight
Rippled over his heart.
The veins of his flaming body
Sang apart.

For all that day of wonder
Flesh and flower lay still,
While color sighed on his eyelids,
And clouds slipped over the hill.

And still in the golden evening
He lay with the dreaming sun,
Till the wind stole away from his body,
And the night and he were one.

A SONG FOR TWILIGHT.

To Katherine.

SLEEP, little poppy,
And rest from thy play.
All things in twilight
Are dreaming of day.

The wind in the cavern,
The star on the cloud,
The mist in the valley,
The maid in the shroud.

The trees on the sky,
And the bird in the nest,
The dew on the flower,
And thou on my breast.

ARAN SLUMBER SONG.

To L. I. G.

ANGELS below me,
Angels above,
Over my eyelids
A slender white dove.

Uiril before me,
Michael behind,
The silence of honey
And dew on the wind.

Aran Slumber Song.

Rustling of swallows
Lulls me to sleep
From the crown of my head
To the soles of my feet.

Softly I slumber
Whatever betide.
The white body of God
Lies down at my side.

SMOORING SONG.

To Louis Albert Lamb.

I BUILD me the hearth
Of the Mother of God
Who guardeth the floor
And watcheth the sod.

Who shines on the road
But Michael the fair?
Who smiles at the door
But Brigid of the hair?

Who stands on the floor
But Peter and Paul?
Who bends o'er my head
But the Shepherd of all?

An angel hath charge
Of the hearth and the byre
Till white day shall come
To the ash of the fire,
Till white day shall come
To the ash of the fire.

MICHAEL PAT.

To Anna Hempstead Branch.

OLD Michael Pat he said to me
He saw an angel in a tree.
He knew I 'd never, never doubt him,
For what would Heaven be without them.
The angel laughed for very glee
And sang out loud: "Heigh! come with me!"
Old Michael felt a creeping kind
Of wonder in his humble mind,
And, hardly knowing what to say,
Ran where the angel showed the way.
The lambs were running on the hills,
Glad laughter echoed from the rills,
And many hidden little birds
Talked pleasant things in singing words.
He followed up a mountain then
And saw a crowd of singing men
Approaching to a Crown of Light
Wherein they took a fresh delight.
He danced and sang and whooped and crew
To see the Lord of all he knew
Surrounded by the living songs
Of stars and men in countless throngs,
And then he died to life again,
And shovelled with the strength of ten.
He taught me how to say my letters,
And take my hat off to my betters,
And when I asked for fairy stories,
He told me of angelic glories.
He was a lovely farmer, he
Had seen an angel in a tree.

A CHRISTMAS WHISTLE.

For Florence and "Grattan."

BROTHER sun and brother wind
And brother dust and I
Are travelling to Bethlehem
To learn why thrushes sigh.

The grey-eyed wizard of the rain
Will lead us to the King,
And He will teach us with a smile
The song the robins sing.

Whistle, robin, in the tree,
Life is but a puddle,
Stirred with starlight white as He
Bards to beauty-fuddle.

Dance around the holly-bush
And sing into the fire
Like the sleepy shepherd-boys
In Baby Jesus' byre.

Ring-a-round-a-rosy,
Lilies at your feet,
Snowdrops for a posy,
Grasses for a seat.

Sing a merry chorus
To the tragic play.
White wings rustle o'er us,
And it is Christmas Day.

THE WHITE MAID OF BALLINASLOE.

To Seumas O'Brien.

WHITE Tearlach rose from his couch of silk
In the morning bright and early,
And he 's taken his steed as white as milk,
And he 's mounted strong and burly.

He travelled over the fields of green
And over the bright blue water
And through the haunted forest's sheen
To steal the king's shining daughter.

He whistled high and he whistled low
And he whistled soft and cheery,
But he 's not come to Ballinasloe,
And he 's not got my dearie.

For when sunlight came at the dawn of day
And the thrushes' call was merry,
Then Mary and I went gallop away
To the tune of "Whistling Jerry."

Galloped away to the wattled church
On the hillside by the ferry,
Where Mary and I left him in the lurch
To the tune of "Whistling Jerry."

I gave her a ring at the dawn of day
In the church there by the ferry.
The mass-priest joined us, then off and away
To the tune of "Whistling Jerry."

He 's come to the ferry beside the hill
On his milk-white steed for Mary,
But for all we care he is riding still
To the tune of " Whistling Jerry."

From the dawn of day to sunset light
He galloped strong and burly,
Astride of his steed so milky white,
But we were away too early.

We whistled high and we whistled low
And we whistle soft and cheery,
For he 's not come to Ballinasloe,
And he 's not got my dearie.

SONG.

MY heart is full of laughing birds
That sing and sing and sing.
They rustle under silver words
And flash a gleaming wing.

My soul is full of cloistered bells
That ring and ring so cool,
Of stars that shine in dreaming wells
Or nestle in a pool.

My eyes were full of shining tears:
I trembled in the grass.
I mind the day. Alas! 't is years! —
But will he never pass?

OFF CHATHAM BARS.

LIGHT, and the cry of the wild dove flying
Over the pathless sunset home,
Out of the mist of sighing waters
Into the silent dying foam.

Nightfall slowly hushing to stillness,
Murmur of shingle slipping down,
Throbbing pulse of the passionate spirit
Brooding over the sleeping town.

The veins of the world are flooding inward,
Earth-flame curls in the running blood,
And flesh, an island in chartless oceans,
Scourged by the lash of the flying scud,

Flowers in stars of adoration,
Chaunting loud to the singing tide,
Wind and moon and waters obeying,
Bridegroom flaming unto the Bride.

ARAN CRADLE SONG.

To John Joseph Phillips.

HUSH thee, my treasure, a glow in thy flesh,
Ariel guards thee, weaving a mesh
Of dreaming and laughter and wonder and flowers
To blow in thine heart in the shining white hours.

A spreading green pasture beneath thy fair feet,
The song of a skylark thy waking to greet,
The bloom of ripe cherries shall smile on thy lips,
Like the smile on the sea where the white sail dips.

Aran Cradle Song.

Ah! rock thee to sleep by the surge of the sea,
Too soon will the waters thy cradling be,
Already the gray winds have sung in thy heart
The message that thou and thy mother shall part.

Thy father's dark curagh went down in the sound,
Thou wast born on the morning his stocking was found,
But hush thee, my white love, hush thee to sleep,
When they keened me the tidings mine eyes did not weep.

The lure of the sea shineth cold in thine eyes,
Wild as the wind and deep as the skies,
We bear thee in pain at the call of the waves,
Our passionate sons whom we keen on their graves.

But hush, little son, in thy cradle so low,
May God his white pity to white mothers show,
Hush thee, my treasure, thy night will be soon,
For the waters are waking and high is the moon.

THE SHROUD.

To Brigid MacDonagh of Inishmaan.

STORM of waters overhead,
Moaning winds beyond the door,
Weaving linen for the dead,
Slipping gently on the floor,

Stitching in and stitching out,
Waves of ocean roaring loud,
Stitching round and round about,
Weaving linen for a shroud.

Keening, swaying, crooning low,
Dull red ashes on the fire,
Stitching linen white as snow,
Wrinkled hands that never tire.

Waves upon a beaten strand,
A stocking floating on the kelp,
Tossed upon the foaming sand,
A knitted stocking cries for help.

Drifting in and drifting out,
Laughing waves upon the shore,
Drifting round and round about
From Donegal to Aranmor.

Seven weeks and seven more,
Floating on a slipping wave
From Donegal to Aranmor,
Crying, crying for a grave.

A dark and dripping thing to see,
Upon the foaming sunlit sand,
A sightless fisher from the sea,
A broken oarlock in his hand.

Keening, swaying, crooning low,
Tottering across the crags,
Bearing linen white as snow,
A poor old woman on the flags.

A poor grey woman does be old
Kneeling on the sunny stones,
A poor grey breast that does be cold
(A dying wind, the tide that moans,)

The Shroud. Wraps him over, wraps him under,
(Light is weeping from a cloud,)
Wraps him round in helpless wonder
With the linen of his shroud.

THE LAST PIPER.

To Walter Conrad Arensberg.

DARK winds of the mountain,
White winds of the sea,
Are skirling the pibroch
Of Seumas an Righ.

The crying of gannets,
The shrieking of terns,
Are keening his dying
High over the burns.

Grey silence of waters,
And wasting of lands,
And the wailing of music
Down to the sands.

The wailing of music,
And trailing of wind,
The waters before him,
The mountains behind.

Alone at the gathering,
Silent he stands,
And the wail of his piping
Cries over the lands

To the moan of the waters, *The Last Piper.*
The drone of the foam,
Where his soul, a white gannet,
Wings silently home.

THE LAMENT AT THE WEDDING.

(*After the Scottish Gaelic.*)

I WILL sit here and crouch and wait, nor am I gay,
At the foot of the Brown Hillock, where I, a girl, grew grey:
I, a poor silly girl, and great were my lover's vows.
They have taken him away from my lonely wee glen of boughs,
The wee glen of cuckoos, and rushes on the ground.
It is there in the folds the drifting herds are found,
And fair maidens fending the new-born calves from death,
And stooping down in kindness they blow on them their breath.
It is there are nuts and rowans, where the wind is blowing south,
And they, love, with the taste of honey on thy mouth.
Brown nuts that hang there upon the hazel tree,
And I, love, to gather them, to gather them with thee.
A thousand shrouds on my friends, that death may steal them with his blast,
They not to have left me to seal thy beauty fast.
It is they put clouds around us, the way we were naked fools,
Would be having not a penny to sit on alehouse stools.

The Lament at the Wedding.

The one would tell that story, let it choke him in his mouth,
And his cattle let them wither in the bitter summer drouth.
Threescore white-shouldered cows are breathing in thy fold,
Threescore dark-grey cows at Rannoch's foot are told,
And thine in any green field a rich herd of mares,
Threescore of goats, and white sheep in pairs.
Gley-eyed John they called thee, and all their bodies shook,
And yet, to my thinking, kind was thy look.
The slope of thy cheek like the sea-gull, thy two sides like the swan,
Thy kiss was sweet as apples, thy breath of cinnamon.
Thy wedding night is making thee a fine and manly man
With four-and-twenty gallants drinking from a can,
With thy elegant maidens, in linen and in silk,
To laugh and to praise thee, and they as white as milk.
But should I get no more of thee, it 's this that I will say,
Come now and invite me to thy wedding day,
To the wedding of the youth, whom I fancied more or less,
Though maybe I 'd be laughing to keep them from a guess.
And a pair of gloves thou 'lt buy me, and linen for a shroud
The night I 'd be dancing with all the wedding crowd,

And a coffin of the ash for a cover under ground,
And thou shalt know in truth then where I can be found,
And wherever thou shalt go then, ah! but I will pray
That gladness may go with thee, though it 's I that am grey!

The Lament at the Wedding.

HELLENICA.

To John Gould Fletcher.

I

UNDER the foaming sky with cloud-capped horses,
I, a maiden, lie by the windy ocean,
Dreaming of quiet waters
Guarded by willows.

II

The flowering side of my love was fair at dawn.
I fled in the grayness.

III

Whither streams the windy hair of the night?
Water plashes drop by drop in the courtyard,
And I lie alone.

IV

Sigh not, stranger.
Here lies white Melitta.
The haunted music of Pan
Makes music in the woodways.

V

Water does not whisper
Beside my bower.
It dreams of Hylas
Prisoned within a prayer.

VI

Pearl-fishers searching the opal waters,
Found this maiden
At rest on the ocean sands,
And raise this mound by the sighing water-waves
To grey-dreaming
Alcina.

VII

Here in peace
Under the swaying olive
Lieth Paula
Who loved the blossoming hillside.

VIII

Flowing light
Runs
Over my eyelids.
For I am Hylas
Praying in the springtime.
Sprinkle apple blossoms on my pillow.

IX

Foam is all they left me for my dreaming,
I who outfled the sun in the race at Corinth,
Hermippus, fleet of foot,
And flower-hearted.

X

Here Glycine rests, under the willows,
Whom men remember after death has forgotten.
Her breasts were fairer than apples in autumn sunlight.

XI

Myrrhis, who tended the flocks on the misty hillside,
Lies softly here, above the trodden pathway,
For she would not hear the steps of her lover, Bion.

XII

Here in the pastured plains
Dreams in azure stillness Daphne, a maiden.
Her throat was softer than light and honey-haunted.

XIII

Low by the aged rocks of the bearded ocean,
Baucis, child of the sky,
Rests awaiting the touch of her mother, Rhodis.

XIV

Over the soft-veiled sea
The wind from the south brings showers
To the grave of Argive Helen,
Whose loveliness lies forgotten in dusty ways.

XV

Under the morning star
In a silver urn
Lieth all that remains of Heraclitus,
Whose eyes beheld the mystery of change.

XVI

Slumber lies grey on the eyes of Clytie,
Who flowered for a day on the breast of her mother,
Then took the way to Acheron alone.

XVII

Flowing limbs have fled to murmurous sod.
The swallows fly from her silent couch of grasses,
But when they return in the springtime they tell to Erinna
How light dreams vainly of her
In the blue hills of Thessaly.

XVIII

Star-crowned Artemis dreamed of Melitta's fairness.
Now here the maiden lies,
For the dreams of a goddess ever become immortal.

XIX

Hyacinth spears now spring from the grave of Daphne,
Wounding the heart of Cleon,
Who tends his flocks on the hill where her feet once lingered.

XX

Here on this wave-washed island,
White as the dreams of her mother,
Lies a Samian maiden
Who knew only the work of her loom.

XXI

Myrto laughed with the swallows in the springlight.
She followed them, and now her childish prattle
Wakens dusty dreams in old shades of Hades.

XXII

The light of Paula's voice has left the sunshine.
Now in the halls of Persephone running gayly
She greets her mother, Helen,
For swift is the way of a child to the breast that warms her.

XXIII

Amyntychus, who turned the brown earth tenderly,
Now lies one with the sod which rests lightly above him,
For they were friends for threescore years and ten.

XXIV

The breath of the west wind soothes him to golden slumber,
Daphnis, whose shepherd pipe in the summer breezes
Wove refreshing dreams by the plashing fountain.
The leaves whisper his name to the running water.

XXV

Crethis, who rivalled the nightingale in passion,
Went to dust in the month of budding laurel,
Crowned with music of unforgotten pain.

XXVI

Cleon does not forget the gentle footsteps
Of Scylla, his little maiden,
Who returns no more unto her father's dwelling,
But walks the long descent into the silence
Tired and alone.

XXVII

Rhodoclea, whose body veiled the sun,
Has fallen into shadow
Under the grasses.

XXVIII

Plato's passion troubled Timon's soul.
His body followed beauty to the end.
Sunlight sifts across his earthy bed.

XXIX

Slumber fell upon the gentle eyelids
Of sweet Theonoë upon the mountain.
When she awoke the cicala was mourning
Down in the valley.

XXX

Callista, who loved the airs of the open spaces,
Fell asleep upon her wedding day.

XXXI

Here lies, in rapture of contemplation,
Hylas, who went away,
And followed the morning star.

XXXII

Maidenly Bacchis wove her wedding tunic.
Now it lies in the dust
That clasps her loveliness.

XXXIII

White-dreaming Pasiphaë
Wanders clad in her beauty
Through the dusky meadows of Persephone.

XXXIV

Anyte, who dissolveth into silence,
Lieth under the flowers of Thessaly,
Fresher than the dew of the eager morning.

XXXV

Myrrha, whose body was clearer than light on water,
Remembers not her beauty
In the stillness.

XXXVI

The scent of mint on the sandy grave of Nicias
Cries unto the wanderer
For remembrance.

XXXVII

Here in the arms of the harvest
Lies the gleaner, Bion,
Whose sickle shines above him in the evening.

XXXVIII

Far from tides and sand
On the slope of Cithæron
Resteth Eumenes
In the purple distance.
His fellow tunny-fishers erect this stone.

XXXIX

Chaste Clearista flowers in the heavens,
For dearer than Helen's beauty in April sunlight
The gods love the spotless dreams of a maiden.

XL

Fairer than iris blossoms slenderly swaying
Under the sighing zephyrs of sandy Argos,
The harvest breezes stole the heart of Erinna.
Now she dreams under the meadow grasses.

XLI

The swan afloat on the rippling azure waters
Has memory of your fairness, Rhododaphne,
And dreams upon time's surface of your passing.

XLII

Nerissa played with the swallows till the twilight.
Now they soar above her,
And they wonder.

XLIII

Far from Cos where the sailors hail in passing,
Cleonicus lies unmarked on the ocean strand.
The crying gulls bring tidings of ancient summer,
But not to me the sound of his glad coming.

XLIV

Hellenica.

Barefoot a little lad has wandered far,
And we have sought in vain,
For he has found
The amaranthine meadows.

XLV

Now that the flower is blown
And the rosy petals
Render earth more fragrant
With their body,
Myrrhis dreams of spring in the flaming ground.

XLVI

Lightly I walked the hills of my native Hellas.
Lightly I rest in the heart of her rushing forest,
Hermas, the hunter,
At peace,
With the moon above me.

XLVII

Thyrsis, who loved the rain in the dreaming hollows,
Wanders now soft-sandalled in misty ways,
Where the scent of flag
Recalls not
Hylas, lonely.

COMPLAINT OF THE OBLIVION OF THE DEAD.

(*From Jules Laforgue.*)

FAIR gentlemen and ladies
Whose mother is no more,
It is the sexton's spade is
A-scraping at your door.

The dead
Are under grass;
Nothing said;
Let it pass.

You smoke in your ale,
You settle a scheme,
Below sings the cock:
Poor dead in a dream!

Grandpa is nodding
Over his cup,
Sister 's crocheting,
Mother lights up.

The dead
Are discreet,
The wind
Is so sweet.

You 've dined very well:
How goes your affair?
Ah! the little still-born
Are not fondled so there!

Set down with a pen
The account, if you 're brave,
" To cost of the ball:
The last mass and the grave."

'T is gay,
This life;
Heigh, wife?
What, nay?

Fair gentlemen and ladies
Whose sister is no more,
Open! the sexton's spade is
A-knocking at your door.

If you do not take pity,
He 'll come (without spite)
And drag you by the feet
At full moon some night.

Hard-hearted
Wind that flays!
The departed?
Gone their ways . . .

THE DEAD MAIDEN.

(*From Paul Fort.*)

THE maid is dead, is dead in her love's fire.
They laid her in the earth, the earth at break of day.
They laid her there alone, alone in her attire,
They laid her there alone, alone within the clay.
And home they wended gayly, gayly with the day,
Homeward singing gayly, gayly: "Each his day.
This maid is dead, is dead in her love's fire."
And to the fields, the fields they went as every day.

THE DRIFTING MAN.

(*I. M.: John Millington Synge: 1871–1909.*)

I

THEY dwelt there by the surging of the sea,
And toiled and dreamed and wondered by the fire,
And never woke to fear, for they were free,
Free as the servant worthy of his hire.
And in the rustling shadows of the hearth,
When night would settle slowly on the world,
They gathered in a group of pleasant mirth
To idle wisely, while the turf-smoke curled
Up through the swallow-haunted chimney-place,
And love and simple faith lit every face.

II

Shadows on honest faces in the gloom
Would dream of neighbors homing through the drift,
The magic stillness soften in the room,
And gentle eyes of solitude would lift,
While kneeling in a circle on the ground
And whispering the rosary of rest,
Their fragrant worship flowered into sound,
And thou wert there, a drifting silent guest.
The lonely swaying sorrow of the wind
Would call to thee in murmurs that repined.

III

And now when summer sun is on the thatch,
They dream of thee beyond the open door,
And one may sigh a little with a catch,
But thou art gone. Dark Seaghan* is there no more.
Down the long windy road thou travellest home
From Aran to the setting of the stars,
Into the singing west thy footsteps roam
Out of the bitter end of passioned wars.
The little room is empty, and the walls
Are lonely when the voice of silence calls.

IV

And one, a boy who wandered on the strand,
Thy friend and mine, who gave to thee his heart,
Bides sadly for thy presence and thy hand,
For thou and he may never dream apart.

* 'Shawn.'

The Drifting Man.

Dost thou behold him brooding on the rocks
High o'er Killeany, where the Western surge
On Aran's heart and thine forever knocks,
And Western winds forever moan thy dirge?
The rushing waters and the frozen rain
Are breaking, for their hearts of thee are fain.

V

And now I may not take the road with thee,
When April larks are climbing in the air,
And music falters o'er the foaming sea,
And poetry and Ireland are fair.
Or swirling through the cloudy Aran sound,
Thy curagh shall no longer in the dawn
Carry in laughing triumph with a bound
Thy drifting face to holy Inishmaan.
Thy flesh forsaken on a windy hill,
Thy spirit chaunts her dying passion still.

VI

Thine heart hath burst in sorrow for the love
It bore the breaking heart of Inisfail.
Thine holy spirit hovereth, a dove
Of light to soothe the memory-haunted Gael.
The sorrowing of Maurya for her sons,
The crying of the sea-gull o'er their grave,
The aching beauty of the flaming ones,
Now mourn in thee the one they might not save.
Yet passion ended, deadly dying done,
Thine eyes now call us to the flaming Sun.

FOR ONE WHO WENT.

(I. M.: Joseph Mary Plunkett.)

THOU, calm swan of battle,
Thou, Host on the hill,
In the name of an Image
A dream may not kill,

The circle is shaken,
The sword is a fire,
Thy son in his anger
Remembers his Sire.

Brimming of waters
And echo of wars
For the dream that he bore
From the Seed to the stars.

Wind unto starlight,
And rain unto sod,
Between his two shoulders
The flaming of God.

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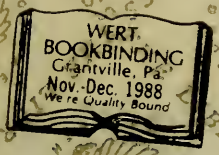
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